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UPHOLDING RIGHTS  
AND FREEDOMS

In the eyes of the law, we are all equal

**Défenseur des droits**  
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

# PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS

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## THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS HANDLES INDIVIDUAL CLAIMS ADDRESSED TO IT

Each situation calls for a personal response, depending on the nature of the case and the expectations. Its teams of lawyers may propose **amicable settlements** (mediation, recommendations, transactions), but they may also present **observations** before the courts or request **sanctions**.

The quality of the work of the Defender of Rights rests on the strength of its **expertise** and **the impartiality** of its decisions. For example, during its investigations, the Defender of Rights always compares the views of the claimant and those of the defendant.

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## MORE THAN 165,000 REQUESTS FOR INTERVENTION PER YEAR

# PROMOTING EQUALITY

The Defender of Rights takes action to promote equality and access to rights. Its objective is to act **preventively**, before inequalities occur, to stop these situations from happening. It shall inform those concerned about their rights. It conducts **awareness-raising** and **training** actions for non-profit sectors and professionals to improve practices on a daily basis. It regularly exchanges with these stakeholders to find out their expectations and inform them of its actions within the framework of its liaison committees and working groups. It makes **recommendations** and drives legislative **reform proposals**.

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“I COULDN'T REGISTER MY DAUGHTER AT THE LEISURE CENTRE  
BECAUSE SHE IS DISABLED.”

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“THE POLICE STATION REFUSED TO FILE MY COMPLAINT.”

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“DESPITE ASKING SEVERAL TIMES, I CAN'T GET MY HEALTH  
INSURANCE CARD.”

## WHAT CAN THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS DO?



INVESTIGATE



PROPOSE  
AN AMICABLE  
SETTLEMENT



MAKE  
RECOMMENDATIONS



PRESENT  
ITS OBSERVATIONS  
BEFORE THE JUDGES



REQUEST  
DISCIPLINARY  
ACTION



MAKE PROPOSALS  
FOR LEGAL REFORM

# ONE INSTITUTION, 5 AREAS OF OPERATION

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## “THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS UPHOLDS RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS”

Article 71-1 of the Constitution

The Defender of Rights is an independent institution responsible for defending individual rights and freedoms within the framework of 5 areas of expertise determined by law:

- ★ Defence of the rights of users of **public services**
- ★ Respect for the **ethics of security**
- ★ Defence and promotion of the **rights of the child**
- ★ Orientation and protection of **whistleblowers**
- ★ Combating **discrimination** and promoting **equality**

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### TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION, THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS:

- ★ **handles the claims** addressed to it by offering appropriate solutions;
- ★ **acts in favour of equal access to rights for all** through information, training, the development of partnerships and the proposal of reforms.

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**MORE THAN 100,000 CLAIM FILES PROCESSED PER YEAR**

# TEAMS THROUGHOUT FRANCE

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## NEARLY 300 EMPLOYEES IN PARIS

The employees of the Defender of Rights make their **skills** and **expertise** available to claimants. They process the files sent to the institution and provide appropriate **solutions**.

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## THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS RELIES ON A NETWORK OF MORE THAN 550 DELEGATES

The delegates of the Defender of Rights are present throughout mainland France, as well as in the overseas departments and regions. They hold clinics at **more than 870 centres**, including prisons.

They receive anybody experiencing difficulties in the full enjoyment of their rights and deal directly with a large number of claims. They listen, support, advise and guide people in their efforts, helping them to assert their rights. They are also responsible for handling individual claims, in the form of amicable settlements and, when amicable settlement fails or proves impossible, for forwarding the file to the head office in Paris.

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**80% OF THE CLAIMS OF THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS  
ARE RECEIVED BY DELEGATES WITHIN THEIR CLINIC**

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**SEE THE LIST OF CLINICS:**

[defenseurdesdroits.fr](https://defenseurdesdroits.fr)

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**DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR RIGHTS  
HAVE BEEN VIOLATED?**

**CONTACT THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS FREE OF CHARGE**

★ **THROUGH THE DELEGATES**

Online at [defenseurdesdroits.fr](http://defenseurdesdroits.fr) /  
“How to get answers?” or at a centre.

★ **BY POST FREE OF CHARGE, WITHOUT POSTAGE**

Défenseur des droits - Libre réponse 71120 -  
75342 Paris Cedex 07

★ **USING THE ONLINE FORM**

Online at [defenseurdesdroits.fr](http://defenseurdesdroits.fr) / “File a Claim”.

★ **+33 (0)9 69 39 00 00 FROM 9 AM TO 6 PM**

Information can be obtained by telephone or during  
an appointment with a delegate.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ATTACH ALL USEFUL DOCUMENTS  
(COPY OF ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS, LETTERS, EMAILS,  
TESTIMONIALS, ETC.) TO ENABLE THE DEFENDER OF RIGHTS  
TO PROCESS YOUR FILE.**

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Recourse to the Defender of Rights is free of charge.  
The Defender of Rights cannot challenge a court  
decision. Referral to it does not interrupt or suspend  
the limitation periods for civil, administrative  
or criminal actions or those of administrative  
or litigation appeals.